

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The present application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated May 2, 2008. Claims 1 and 3-12 are currently pending, of which claims 1 and 6-9 are amended. Claims 2 and 13-18 have previously been cancelled. Applicant respectfully requests early and favorable reconsideration of this application.

Claims 1 and 3-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter. In particular, the Examiner states that with respect to independent claims 1, 6 and 9, "it is not certain where 'a radial dimension of the tubular body' is located and measured; and it is not certain what feature of the onion portion is being positioned and measured with respect to the radial dimension of the tubular body." Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 6 and 9, as amended herein, are allowable over this rejection.

Independent claims 1, 6 and 9 are each amended to distinctly point out that the onion portion is "supported" by the tubular body. Because the onion portion is no longer defined as a component of the tubular body, this amendment distinguishes the "radial dimension of the tubular body" from any dimension that may be defined by the onion portion. Claims 1, 6 and 9 are each further amended to clarify the nature of the movement of the onion portion in relation to the tubular body.

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further amended to clarify the nature of the movement of the onion portion in relation to the tubular body.

In support thereof, as indicated by paragraph [0034] of the present application, a radius of tubular body 102 is defined as permitting reception of tubular body 102 slidably within sleeve 104. Paragraphs [0036] and [0037] of the present application describe first and second configurations of the onion portion inside and outside, respectively, of the radial dimension of the tubular body 102.

With respect to independent claim 6, the Examiner further asserts "it is not certain whether the barbs comprise the onion portion or are distinct parts connected with the onion portion." Applicant respectfully disagrees with this assertion, and submits that claim 6, in this regard, is clear on its face and thus would not need any further amendment. However, in the interest of advancing prosecution, Applicant has amended claim 6 to clarify the structural relationships between the elements recited therein.

With respect to independent claim 9, the Examiner further asserts that "the ribs" lacks antecedent basis. Accordingly, claim 9 has been amended to recite the phrase "the onion portion comprises a plurality of ribs" prior to the recitation of "the ribs." This phrase was inadvertently removed by prior amendment.

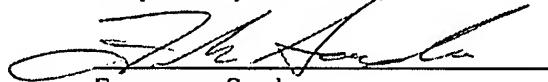
Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 6 and 9, as amended, are in condition for allowance and requests that the rejections thereto be withdrawn. Dependent claims 7-8 are amended to include language consistent with the amendment of independent claim 1.

Since dependent claims 3-5, 7-8 and 10-12 depend from and include all the amendments and clarifications made to the independent claims from which they depend, Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are also in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections to these claims be withdrawn.

Should the Examiner believe that a telephone interview may facilitate prosecution of this application, or resolve any outstanding matters, the Examiner is sincerely invited to contact the applicant's undersigned representative at the number indicated below.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the application and allowance of claims 1 and 3-12 is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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